

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

NSAE-00 SIL-01 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06 AID-05 PC-01 CU-02

OPR-02 /048 W

----- 080097

R 101840Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY QUITO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7916

INFO AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 8205

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, ELAB, EC

SUBJECT: GENERAL STRIKE: CONVERSATION WITH CEOSL SECRETARY GENERAL
JOSE CHAVEZ

REF: QUITO 8003

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: IN CONVERSATION WITH CEOSL (ECUADOREAN
CONFEDERATION OF FREE LABOR ORGANIZATIONS) SECRETARY GENERAL
JOSE CHAVEZ ON NOV. 6, LABOR OFFICER WAS TOLD THAT THE
THREE LABOR CONFEDERATIONS (CEOSL, CEDOC, AND CTE) STILL
PLAN ON CONDUCTING A NATIONWIDE GENERAL STRIKE NOV. 13.
LEADERS OF THE THREE CONFEDERATIONS MET WITH PRESIDENT
RODRIGUEZ AND LABOR MINISTER AGUIRRE SEPT. 31 AND WERE
ASKED BY THE PRESIDENT NOT TO STRIKE.
ACCORDING TO CHAVEZ, RODRIGUEZ PROMISED TO STUDY LABOR
DEMANDS AND TO RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE EARLY IN 1976 WHILE
THREATENING TO REPRESS ANY GENERAL STRIKE. END SUMMARY

2. JOSE CHAVEZ, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE ECUADOREAN CON-
FEDERATION OF FREE LABOR ORGANIZATIONS (CEOSL) TOLD LABOFF
NOV. 6 THAT ECUADOR'S THREE LABOR CONFEDERATIONS (CTE,
CEOSL, CEDOC) STILL PLAN TO CARRY OUT A JOINT NATIONAL
GENERAL STRIKE NOV. 13.

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3. LEADERS OF THE THREE CONFEDERATIONS MET WITH PRESIDENT

RODRIGUEZ AND LABOR MINISTER AGUIRRE SEPT. 31. ACCORDING TO CHAVEZ, RODRIGUEZ REVIEWED THE CONFEDERATIONS' LIST OF DEMANDS (FORMERLY PUBLISHED) AND WENT THROUGH WHAT THE GOE COULD DO ABOUT THEM. HE PROPOSED A JOINT GOVERNMENT/ UNION COMMISSION TO REVIEW LEGISLATION WHICH IS VIEWED BY THE CONFEDERATION AS ANTI-LABOR. HE SAID THAT THERE WOULD BE A RAISE OF THE MINIMUM WAGE EARLY IN 1976, BUT NOT THE 50 PERCENT INCREASE DEMANDED BY LABOR. HE COMMENTED THAT THE GOE, AS WELL AS THE LABOR MOVEMENT, DESIRED THE NATIONALIZATION OF THE PETROLEUM INDUSTRY, BUT FOR THE MOMENT, THE COUNTRY NEEDED THE FOREIGN OIL COMPANIES.

4. CHAVEZ REPORTED THAT AFTER DISCUSSING UNION DEMANDS, RODRIGUEZ SAID THAT BY CARRYING OUT A GENERAL STRIKE AT THIS TIME THE LABOR MOVEMENT WAS ALIGNING ITSELF WITH THE OLIGARCHS AND IMPERIALISTS AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT, SOMETHING THE GOE WOULD NOT ACCEPT. THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT IF THE CONFEDERATIONS PERSISTED, HE WOULD REPRESS THE STRIKE. CHAVEZ CLAIMS THAT HE THEN PERSONALLY PRESENTED THE ARGUMENT THAT THE CONFEDERATIONS WERE EXERCISING THEIR FREE RIGHT TO STRIKE AND IF THE GOE MOVED TO PREVENT SUCH ACTION THAT THESE WOULD BE MORE PROBLEMS CREATED THAN IF THE GOE WOULD NOT INTERVENE. CHAVEZ REPORTED THAT THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT HE WOULD CONSIDER THE POINT AND THAT AS THE MEETING CONCLUDED THERE WAS NO DEFINITE DECISION EXPRESSED BY RODRIGUEZ THAT THE STRIKE WOULD BE REPRESSED.

5. CHAVEZ SAID THAT DURING THE MEETING THE REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE COMMUNIST CTE EITHER SUPPORTED THE GENERAL GOE POSITION OR REMAINED MUTE AS CHAVEZ EXPLAINED THE WORKERS' POSITION. HE ASCRIBES THIS BEHAVIOR TO THE "FACT THAT THE CTE'S CONNECTIONS ARE SO GOOD WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT THAT THEY FIND IT UNNECESSARY TO APPLY PRESSURE."

6. CHAVEZ COMMENTED THAT THE CONFEDERATIONS WERE CERTAIN THAT THEIR RANK AND FILE AFFILIATES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY WOULD CARRY OUT THE STRIKE INSTRUCTIONS OF THEIR PARENT ORGANIZATIONS. WHEN ASKED ABOUT THE TRANSPORT WORKERS HE SAID THAT THE CONFEDERATIONS WOULD FIND A WAY TO ASSURE THEIR PARTICIPATION.

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7. CHAVEZ AND HIS COUNTERPARTS HAVE DECIDED THAT THERE ARE TO BE NO WORKER DEMONSTRATIONS OR PARADES BECAUSE THIS WOULD INCREASE THE POSSIBILITY OF VIOLENT CONFRONTATIONS WITH POLICE. HE IS PERSONALLY CONTEMPLATING ASKING STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS TO TAKE TO THE STREETS DURING THE TWELVE HOURS OF THE STRIKE. STUDENTS HAVE PUBLISHED DECLARATIONS OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE STRIKE AND INDICATED THEY WOULD

PARTICIPATE.

8. COMMENT: THE USE OF STUDENTS IN THE STREETS
INCREASES THE POSSIBILITY OF VIOLENCE THE DAY OF THE
STRIKE. LABOFF LEARNED FROM ANOTHER SOURCE THAT THE
CONFEDERATIONS HAVE BEEN UNSUCCESSFUL IN ENLISTING THE
COOPERATION OF THE CHAUFFEURS FOR THE STRIKE BECAUSE THEY
REFUSE TO SUPPORT THE DRIVERS DEMANDS FOR FARE INCREASES.
CHAVEZ, REALIZING THAT THE STRIKE WILL HAVE ONLY LIMITED
EFFECTIVENESS WITHOUT THE SHUT-OFF OF TRANSPORTATION
SERVICES, IS CONTEMPLATING EMPLOYING STUDENTS TO STOP
COMMERCIAL TRANSPORTATION. THE EMPLOYING OF STUDENTS
IN THIS MANNER WOULD LIKELY DAMAGE THE GOOD RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN CEOSL AND THE CHAUFFERU'S ORGANIZATION.
BREWSTER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, LABOR UNIONS, LABOR STRIKES, STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 NOV 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975QUITO08205
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750391-0166
From: QUITO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751158/aaaacafm.tel
Line Count: 130
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 QUITO 8003
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 SEP 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 SEP 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <17 SEP 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GENERAL STRIKE: CONVERSATION WITH CEOSL SECRETARY GENERAL JOSE CHAVEZ
TAGS: PINT, ELAB, EC, CTE, CEDOC, CEOSL, (CHAVEZ, JOSE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006